

**State of Alaska Department of  
Transportation and Public Facilities**

**Frank H. Murkowski**  
Governor  
P.O. Box 110001  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-  
0001



**Mike Barton**  
Commissioner  
**907-465-3900**  
**FAX: 907-586-8365**  
**www.dot.state.ak.**  
**us**

For Immediate Release:

June 18, 2004

04-2531

Airport Way intersection gets safer; Market Street acceleration lane eliminated.  
*Intersection improvements last traffic revision for the Market Street and Washington Drive project.*

“This is the last traffic revision in our project to improve the access to the southwest Airport Way area neighborhoods and businesses.” Said Andrew Niemiec, Northern Region Director, Dept. of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF). The project addressed a transportation need identified in the mid 1980’s when area residents became concerned with increased commercial traffic moving through the neighborhoods. Mr. Niemiec continued, “The removal of the acceleration lane and associated signals make this a safer intersection for our community.”

In 1985, DOT&PF funded the Southwest Neighborhood Subarea Transportation study, which recommended a number of road revisions, including the new Washington Drive intersection and improvements on Market Street. At that time, traffic between Washington and Market was projected to be 9,700 in the year 2005. The 2002 traffic counts put average daily traffic at over 14,000.

The existing Market Street intersection, which includes an acceleration lane and associated signals, is the only intersection of its kind in the Fairbanks area. It was an interim measure (built as a condition of the Kmart Store opening in the early 1990’s) to accommodate the significant increase in traffic at the intersection. Transportation engineers often do not favor unique traffic configurations because they can contribute to higher than typical accident rates. “If a traffic configuration is not consistent with drivers expectations, we tend to see an increase in crashes.” said Mark Neidhold, Traffic and Safety Chief for Dept. of Transportation and Public Facilities Northern Region.

DOT&PF engineers reevaluated the elimination of the acceleration lane and signals after ownership of the former Kmart building changed. Engineers concluded that it was still appropriate to remove the acceleration lane and signals because the intersection will serve current traffic volumes and improve the safety of that intersection.

The Airport Way project began last year. The Washington Drive intersection opened in December 2003 and provides better access to the businesses located on either sides of Airport Way, Rewak Drive and Geraghty Street. While the project is substantially complete, work will continue throughout the summer on landscaping, sign installation, and minor sidewalk repairs.

For more information contact Shannon McCarthy, Information Officer, DOT&PF Northern Region at (907) 451-2240.